



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/540,035	03/31/2000	Jay S Walker	99-063	2466

22927 7590 10/22/2003

WALKER DIGITAL
FIVE HIGH RIDGE PARK
STAMFORD, CT 06905

EXAMINER

POINVIL, FRANTZY

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3628

DATE MAILED: 10/22/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/540,035

Applicant(s)

WALKER ET AL.

Examiner

Frantzy Poinvil

Art Unit

3628

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 March 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-45 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 7-45 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5-6 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4, 17-22 and 25-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tagawa (US Patent No. 5,732,398).

As per claims 1 and 2, 17-22 and 25-45, Tagawa discloses a self-service system for selling travel-related service or products. Note the abstract. The system comprises a user providing a description related to a product desired to purchase. Note the abstract. The system searches the database to determine what is available. The user is provided with a list of available choices with related prices. The user may desire to provide alternate options and a new list is presented to the user. The list contains sales prices of the selected product with different options thus meeting the limitations of “wherein the sale price for a selected product is a first price if the product description is a first product description and a second price if the product description is a second product description”. It is noted that the user or customer is not guaranteed what specific product will be purchased before an agreement to purchase a product for the sale price is received from the customer.

As per claim 3, the plurality of displayed products with various options are similar to the claimed "identifying a plurality of products conforming to the product description". Each product description has a related sales price.

As pr claim 4, determining a measure of flexibility based on the product description is similar to determining and making one of a plurality of available choices by the user wherein the choices each has a related sales price.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. Claims 7-16 and 23-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tagawa (US Patent 5,732,398) as applied to claims 1 above, and further in view of Day et al (5,857,175).

As per claims 7-16, Tagawa does not explicitly teach calculating a discount amount based on the product description and determining the sale price based on the discount amount. Day et al disclose an electronic shopping system that provides discounts to customers. Applicant is directed to the abstract of Day et al. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Day et al into Tagawa in order to provide discounts to a customer buying a particular product. The motivation would have been to maintain customer loyalty and at the same time encouraging customers to purchase more goods/services. Day et al also discloses determining a customer's history and purchase activity.

As per claims 23-24, Day et al disclose transmitting coupons or incentives to the customers. The coupons include an identifier therein.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The basis of this rejection is set forth in a two prong test of:

- (1) whether the invention is within the technological arts; and
- (2) whether the invention produces a useful, concrete and tangible result.

For a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must be within the technological arts. Mere ideas in the abstract (i.e., abstract idea, law of nature, natural phenomena) that do not apply, involve, use or advance the technological arts fail to promote the “progress of science and the useful arts” (i.e., the physical sciences as opposed to social sciences, for example) are found to be non-statutory subject matter. For a process claim to pass muster, the recited process must somehow apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts. In the present case, claims 1-28 do not recite any structure or functionality to suggest that a computer performs the recited claims. Thus, claims 1-28 are rejected as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

4. The prior art taken alone or in combination failed to teach or suggest a step of summon determined flexibility points for each condition in the product description as recited in claim 5.

Claims 5-6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

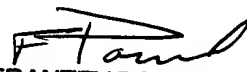
Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frantzy Poinvil whose telephone number is (703) 305-9779. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 7:00AM-5:30PM.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9326 Before Final actions and (703) 872-9327 After Final actions..

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

FP
9/25/03


FRANTZY POINVIL
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Au 3628